AP US History

Chapter 20 Questions

1. What were the motivations for US imperialist behavior in the late 19th/early 20th centuries?

The main motivations for US imperialist behavior was mostly manifest destiny and to help its economy even further. Manifest destiny was already popular during the 1840s, but now much of the West had been found and there is civilization there, so now they take a further step in this dream by becoming imperialist. The acquisition of Hawaii was just one example of this. Their economy was important to them, since the West was fading (the frontier), natural resources were soon to deplete so they had to find new places with natural resources-some of these places were Hawaii and Samoa. It could have been to try and gain more power, as they did establish various bases around the new lands outside of NA. More reasons could include the desire to map the entire world, to gain more data, to boost national pride and security, to find better ways of trading, exporting more, etc.

1. What were the causes and consequences of the Spanish-American War? Why was it called “A Splendid Little War?” Is that an accurate nickname?

Two of the main reasons for this war were the Dupuy de Lome’s letter stating that McKinley was a coward, a follower, weak, etc. was one cause, the other cause was the destruction of the *Maine* which was thought to be a Spanish mine. There were however little consequences for America, but one exception were the Philippine War as a result of freeing the Philippines during the war. In the letter it had insulted the president by a very large amount, this obviously had raised incent for the Spanish minister, causing tensions between the US and Spain. The second reason was the blowing up of the *Maine*, with over 260 people dead-all American, the Americans had probably hated the Spanish now, and this was one fact of why they had gone to declare war against Spain. This war was also called “a splendid little war” because it was short and it had a lot of benefits for America. In other words, it is an accurate nickname for this war, it only lasted a measly four months and the US had gained two new territories out of this.

1. Describe American interest and intervention in China.

There was American interest/intervention in China because they had an important trade with them and it was prone to intervention from other countries so they had decided to do something about it. John Hay had created proposals to stop intervention by asking other nations to accept the “open door” proposals, they would basically allow the United States to trade freely with China without interference, also retained the illusion of Chinese sovereignty and prevented formal colonial dismemberment of China. They had to also take part in quelling the Boxer Rebellion so that other nations would agree to the proposals-which they did. In other words, they were passionate about the trade, they were greedy, they wanted all to themselves, and they did for now.

1. What were the various results of American imperialistic activity between 1880 and 1910?

Some of the various results of this activity were the acquisition of new land and problems with activity. Hawaii and Samoa had become territories of America. This was because they had forced a devastation to the Hawaiian economy. In Samoa, they had gained the harbor at Pago Pago. With these islands (including Guam and Puerto Rico) they were important in trade to them, it was basically a refueling station to help increase exports for money/power. A major problem that occurred out of this was the Philippine War, they had wanted complete independence from the US. Eventually they had helped settle them down for a while but did not gain their independence from the US until later into the 1940s.